

The BROAD AX

HEW TO THE LINE; LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY

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No. 41

Robert T. Motts, Owner and Manager of the Pekin Theater

PASSED AWAY AT HIS BEAUTIFUL HOME, 4110 CALUMET AVENUE, EARLY MONDAY MORNING.

HE WAS THE LAST OF THE FIRM OF SNOWDEN, MOTTS, AND BEASLEY.

HE CAME TO THIS CITY FROM WASHINGTON, IOWA, WHERE HE WAS BORN AND WHERE HIS REMAINS WILL LIE BY THE SIDE OF HIS PARENTS, THIRTY YEARS AGO.

AND SINGLE HANDED AND ALONE HE ACHIEVED FAME AND FORTUNE AND THE INFLUENCE WHICH HE EXERCISED FOR GOOD WILL LIVE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME IN THE MEMORIES OF THOSE WHO KNOW HIM BEST.

FUNERAL SERVICES WERE HELD OVER HIS REMAINS AT QUINN CHAPEL THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND WELL ON TO FOUR THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE IN AND AROUND THE CHURCH DURING THE SERVICES.

REVS. W. D. COOK AND D. P. ROBERTS, PAID GLOWING TRIBUTES TO HIM AS AN ENTERPRISING CITIZEN, BENEVOLENT FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR TO HIS FELLOW MEN.

DANIEL M. JACKSON WAS IN CHARGE OF THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PERFORMED HIS PART TO PERFECTION.

THE ELKS HEADED BY THEIR BAND MET THE FUNERAL CORTEGE AT 35th AND STATE STREET AND MARCHED ON TO THE CHURCH WITH IT.

THE FLORAL TRIBUTES WERE NUMEROUS AND SIMPLY MAGNIFICENT.

FRANK W. SOLON, SUPERINTENDENT OF STREETS OF CHICAGO, JAMES A. QUINN, CITY SEALER, STATE SENATOR FRANCIS P. BRADY, ALDERMAN WILSON SHUFELT, ATTORNEY GEORGE S. FOSTER AND OTHER PROMINENT WHITE CITIZENS ATTENDED THE SERVICES.

ROBERT T. MOTTS WAS ONE OF OUR WARMEST FRIENDS AND WITH HIS THOUSANDS OF FRIENDS THE WRITER JOINS WITH THEM IN LAMENTING HIS UNTIMELY DEATH.

Robert T. Motts, who was a power in politics among the Afro-Americans on the South Side, who was also a giant in the business and theatrical world among both races and who was well and favorably known throughout all parts of the United States and the old world as well, for he it remembered that he had the honor of being the first Colored man in the wide world to construct and conduct a theater, to be run in the interest of the Colored race; in which members of his race always had the right of way on its stage, even down to the very day of his death.

Silently passing away early last Monday morning at his beautiful home 4110 Calumet ave., after an illness of three or four weeks, leukemia was the immediate cause of his death.

He was born in Washington, Iowa, June 24, 1861, being a little more than 50 years old at the time he gently folded his arms in death, he wended his way to this city without money and friends in 1881, from his native home, and after serving as a first class coachman and working at other odd jobs, all the time saving his money, he finally decided to engage in business for himself and shortly thereafter the old firm of Snowden, Motts and Beasley, was formed which consisted of Samuel R. Snowden, who died a few years ago in New York City, without one dollar to his name, Robert T. Motts, and William Beasley, who passed away a few years ago stripped of every dollar of his former wealth.

They threw their names to the breeze at 480 South State street, and in a very short time their resort became the headquarters for all the Colored sporting men in this city and also for those visiting it from all parts of the United States and the result was that they made money hand over fist, they continued in business at that number until 1890, then they removed to 2700 State street, and no one can ever estimate the amount of money they made after their removal further South, for each member of the firm fairly rolled in wealth and at all times they were bedecked from head to foot with diamonds and other costly jewelry; in time Snowden and Beasley, concluded that they had enough money to paint the whole world red, so they dropped out of the old firm and Robert T. Motts, continued to press on and on single handed and alone, he saved his money and wisely invested a good bit of it in real estate and when he passed away he owned 75 feet of it at the corner of 37th and State street, where the Pekin theater stands as a living monument to his

thrift and enterprise, he also owned the brick building at 38th and State street occupied by Rankin and White's drug store, aside from owning his beautiful home on Calumet ave., near 41st street, in addition to owning and controlling a great deal of very valuable personal property and it can be truly said that he achieved fame and fortune and that the influence which he exerted for good, will live for many years to come in the memories of those who knew him best.

Funeral services were held over his remains at Quinn Chapel, Thursday afternoon, and well over four thousand people were in and around the church during the services, proving beyond a doubt that he occupied a warm spot in the hearts of the people in all walks of life.

Revs. W. D. Cook and D. P. Roberts, in their eloquent orations over his mortal remains paid glowing tributes to him as an enterprising citizen, benevolent friend and benefactor to his fellowmen and that he surely would find favor in "the sight of the great God who sent him into this world and then removed him from it at His own appointed time that he accomplished much more in every way in the short space of time he was in it, than thousands of those who live to be three score years and ten," their words of consolation to his broken hearted relatives and sorrowing friends were indeed very fitting.

Daniel M. Jackson, was in charge of the funeral arrangements which were as follows and he performed his part to perfection: First music by the Byron Brothers Orchestra; opening remarks, Rev. W. D. Cook; Prayer, Rev. Dr. H. J. Callis; Solo, "Flee as a Bird," Mrs. Marie Burton-Hyram; tribute to his memory, Rev. W. D. Cook; Solo, Dear Lord Remember Me, Creighton Thompson; Singing by the choir; Solo, Mrs. Patricia Brown; Remarks, Rev. D. P. Roberts, Pastor of Bethel Church; Solo, Miss Ida Banks.

The Elks, headed by their band met the funeral cortege at 35th and State street and marched onto the church with it and after the above services had been rendered the members of that order assumed charge of his remains and J. J. Jones, its Grand Exalted Ruler, conducted their ceremonies over them, Louis B. Anderson, very effectively read the obituary and after Robert T. Motts, was unable to answer to his name when the roll was called and after a short talk by W. W. Johnson, the Elks closed their part of the services by each and every one of them joining

in singing "Nearer My God to Thee."

The floral tributes, were numerous and simply magnificent. Among those contributing them were as follows: Mr. and Mrs. George W. Holt, harp and wreath of white and pink roses. Major and Mrs. F. A. Denison, wreath. The Colored Vaudeville Benevolent Association, floral heart, Billy Kersands, S. Davis, Ruby Shelton, Sylvester Russell C. Bruce, Bert Murphy, S. McKissick W. P. Sweetman, B. McCarroll, and others, wreath. Mr. and Mrs. Billy Kersands; Goats Club pillow; Frogs of New York City, wreath; Mr. and Mrs. Bunch, Mr. Joseph Kelley and Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Johnson, pillow; L. L. Sachs, flat piece; Rufus Eetes, flat piece; Mr. Schank and Schultz, wreath; Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Codozoe, wreath; Griffin Sisters, broken harp; Joe Bach, flat wreath; C. R. L. D. A., broken wheel; Col. and Mrs. J. R. Marshall and Easie Arnold, moon and star; Mr. and Mrs. Montrose Rankin, sheaf of wheat; Mrs. D. P. French and Mrs. R. P. Johnson, lilies Mr. and Mrs. Henry Jones, American Beauties; W. H. Bowers and G. F. Leibbrandt, white roses; Rees Bros. and Africanders, roses, lilies, carnations and lilacs; Mrs. H. J. Hines, wreath roses and sweet peas; Appomattox Club, wreath roses, carnations and lilies; Mrs. Gabe Smith, Miss Grace Knighten, and Mrs. Frances Tervalon, pink carnation and American beauties; Mr. Edward D. Green, pedestal wreath of white roses; Mr. and Mrs. James Cooper and D. Sampson and D. Copper, white roses; Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Fry, lilies master; Ald. Geo. F. Harding, wreath.

The flowers extended clear across the platform in Quinn chapel, and there was hardly sufficient room to properly display them, two carriages were used in conveying them to and from the church.

Frank W. Solon, superintendent of streets of Chicago; James A. Quinn, its city sealer; State Senator Francis P. Brady, Alderman Wilson Shufelt, Attorney George S. Foster, and other prominent white citizens attended the funeral services. Mr. Foster, and four other white families aside from his own residing on the North side all came from Washington, Iowa, the birthplace of Robert T. Motts, and knowing him and highly respecting his family, Wednesday evening they held a meeting at the home of Mr. Foster and they selected him to visit the house and convey their unbounded sympathy to the members of his family, and to attend the funeral services, and to bring back a full report to them as

to how they were conducted and so on and Mr. Foster carried out their instructions to the letter.

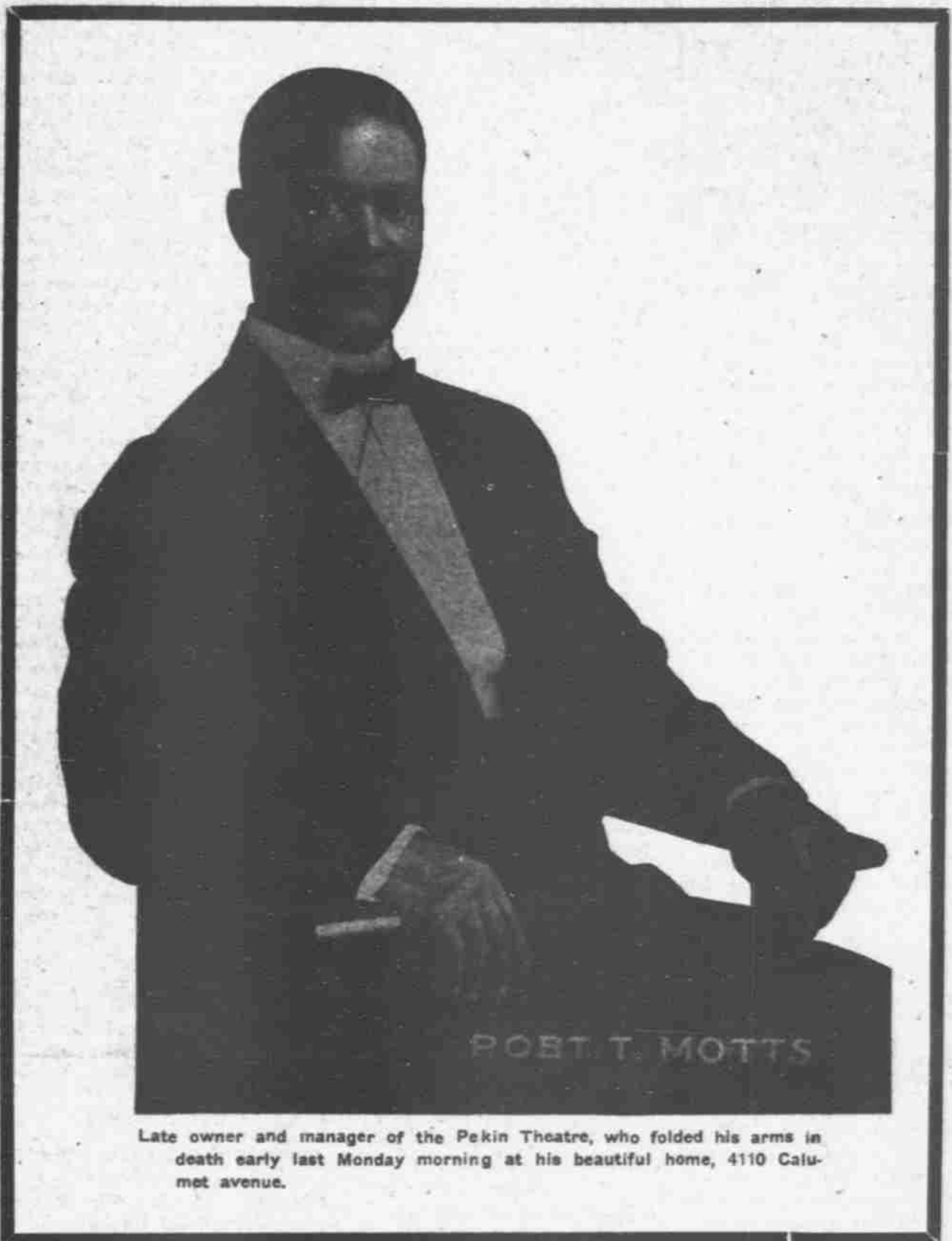
Joseph R. Dunn, Frenchy Coleman, George Height, George J. Terrell, Charles Powell and Al. Perice were the active pall bearers, while the honorary pall bearers were as follows:

Wm. R. Cowan, Ed. D. Green, Emanuel Jackson, Henry Jones, Montrose Rankin, Beauregard F. Moseley, Geo. W. Holt, James Tuppins, Jesse Binga, John Slanter, A. F. Tervalon, James Miller, Wm. Clark, L. B. Anderson, A. F. Codozoe, Ed. Wilson, Capt. John Fry, Prof. Wm. Emanuel, John Slaughter, Sam Corker Jr., Lieut. John L. Hawkins, Dan White, Tom Price.

Robert Motts, is survived by one brother, Fred Motts, who resides in Washington, Iowa, one sister, Miss Lucy Lindsay, two nieces, the Misses Nora and Helen Motts, and four nephews, Ralph, Thomas F. Robert and Leon Motts, he was a member of the Elks, the Appomattox Club, and secretary of the Colored Retail Liquor Dealers Association, and its president Henry (Tenan) Jones who was his bosom friend stood faithfully by him to the end of his life's journey.

His remains were encased in a state casket of cedar and mahogany, covered with heavy black broad cloth, ornamented with rich silver mountings; the hearse conveying it to and from the church and to the Rock Island Depot was drawn by four black horses heavily draped in mourning at 11:30 o'clock, Thursday evening, his earthly remains were placed aboard a train on the Rock Island and those accompanying the body to Washington, Iowa, were Messrs. Sam J. Corker, Jr., J. L. Fry, Geo. W. Holt, Lieut. Hawkins, W. R. Cowan and Dan M. Jackson and on Friday he was laid to rest by the side of his parents who have gone on into the next world before him.

Robert T. Motts, was one of our warmest friends and with his thousands of friends the writer heartily joins with them in lamenting his untimely death.



Late owner and manager of the Pekin Theatre, who folded his arms in death early last Monday morning at his beautiful home, 4110 Calumet avenue.

THE TRIBUTE OF LOUIS B. ANDERSON TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT T. MOTTS.

"A spirit looking backwards, sighed: 'How strange that now you see no flaw'

In one whose faults alone you saw Before he died."

At this hour and in this presence we come to pay the parting tribute to the life and character of our silent friend as we knew and spoke of him in his lifetime. We shall not inter with his body those splendid qualities which made him such a hopeful force in the struggles of his people to attain merit and reward. Rather, we shall treasure them as cherished memories of a great character.

Robert T. Motts stood in this community as a giant oak in the forest. He was the pioneer representative of the Negro race in the successful conduct of a theatrical enterprise. It was in this line of endeavor that he stands most prominently out as a benefactor of countless aspiring Thespians whose successful careers owe their beginning to the helpful hand and kindly ministrations of Robert Motts. Standing today as a mute monument to his genius and enterprise the Pekin Theater will always live and be remembered as his crowning effort. With the possible exception of his immediate family, none will miss him more than the small army of employees of the Pekin Theater and its subsidiary activities. To him they looked as children to a parent. His great big heart and tender consideration made possible the very daily existence of more members of his race, than perhaps any other single representative of his people in any part of our common country. Throughout this land, and in foreign lands, the name of Robert Motts was known; indeed, no empty statement is made when we say that he was one of the best known and loved members of his race.

As a citizen he was honored and respected everywhere. In testimony of the high esteem in which he was held by business men of large interests, we recall an incident which happened some few weeks prior to his fatal illness. A young man of refinement and intelligence, who had recently arrived

in Chicago, after futile attempts to secure employment sought out and told the story of his failure to our departed friend. Satisfying himself that the young man was worthy, he boarded a street car, took him to a business friend and requested that he be given employment. The young man was given a position at good wages. We do not know whether this young man is in our presence today mourning the loss of his benefactor, but we do know that this is but one of the numerous kindly deeds so characteristic of the man.

The organization, at whose request I feel pay this tribute, had no member more valuable than he. They, in common with thousands of others, will feel deeply his loss. They will miss his words of wisdom, his counsel and advice.

And now, as we are about to finally gaze with bedimmed eyes upon all that remains mortal of our friend and brother, and as with faltering tones we bid him a long farewell, we cannot help recalling the last tribute paid by Fitz-Green Halleck to his bosom friend Drake:

"Green be the sods above thee,
Friend of my better days;
None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor spoke of thee but in praise."

BRILLIANT RECEPTION HELD AT THE APPOMATTOX CLUB IN HONOR OF THE NEWLY WEDDED BRIDES.

Friday afternoon from 2 to 5 o'clock a very brilliant reception was held at Appomattox Club in honor of the newly wedded brides, Mrs. Marie Burton-Hyram and Mrs. Mattie Johnson-Young. Mrs. Martha B. Anderson, Mrs. William Emanuel, Mrs. Robert J. Collins, Mrs. M. A. Majors and Miss Diana Hackley very charmingly received the three hundred richly gowned ladies who attended it, many of them being conveyed to and from the reception in autos.

The club rooms were beautifully decorated with American beauties and other choice flowers and palms. Sweet music was discoursed during the reception and in every way it was a very enjoyable affair.